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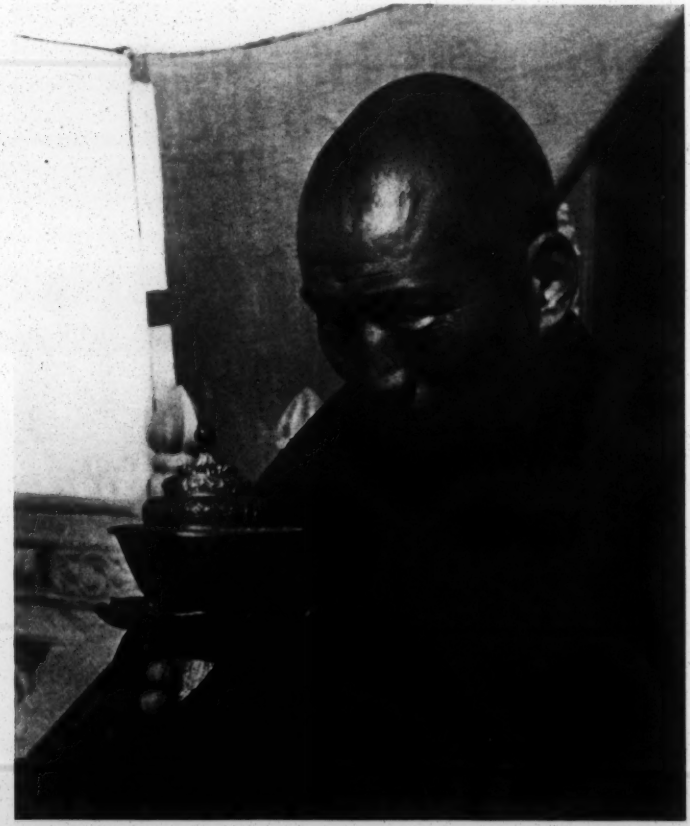

LT. COL. ILIA TOLSTOY

A CRINGING TIBETAN PRIEST (Bulletin No. 1) CARRIES THE DALAI LAMA'S GOLD AND JADE TEACUP, BITING HIS ROBE TO KEEP FROM BREATHING ON THE SACRED VESSEL.

Bulletin No. 1, November 20, 1950

Tibet Has Kept Its Isolation for Centuries

LOFTY Tibet, a medieval land thrust suddenly into today's headlines by Chinese communist invasion, is far stranger in fact than its fictional counterpart, the "Shangri-La" popularized by novelist James Hilton.

Tibet is one of the least-known and most-isolated nations in the modern world. For centuries this "Forbidden Land" of central Asia has remained aloof from other nations—and seemingly from time itself—behind the protective screen of the Himalayas and other towering ranges.

Eastern Boundary in Dispute

Shaggy yaks and sure-footed donkeys and ponies are Tibet's only means of transport. There are no railways, airfields, or highways. Communication links with the outside world consist of a few state-owned radio sets and a single telephone and telegraph line from the capital, Lhasa, to northern India. This line is cut at times by roving bandits.

Tibet's borders are ill defined in some areas. For instance, the eastern boundary with China's Sikang Province is the subject of an ancient dispute. Consequently the size of Tibet has been variously estimated at from 463,000 to some 800,000 square miles. In much of this territory even the plains and valleys are over 15,000 feet high.

Some uncertainty also exists regarding the number of Tibetans. The best estimate is about 3,000,000. Most of them live in such towns and trading centers as Lhasa, Shigatse, and Gyangtse in the southern part of the country, and on the lower slopes where such staple crops as barley and peas can be grown. Many of the people are nomads, wandering about the high plateaus in search of forage for the hardy yak.

Their country is the homeland of Lamaistic Buddhism, a religion based on a strong belief in reincarnation. The Dalai Lama, to Tibetans a divine being, is the god-king of the state. When he dies, his countrymen believe his spirit enters into a child born near the same time. Holy men consult the state oracle, perform proper rituals, and begin searching the nation for the child.

Pilgrims Expand Lhasa's Population

The present Dalai Lama normally would assume full power next year upon reaching his eighteenth birthday. A regent has ruled in his name while he was under age. The government is largely theocratic, or church directed. Each important state position is held by two men, a monk and a layman, and the monk generally has control. It has been estimated that one out of every four males in Tibet joins a holy order (illustration, cover). Monasteries are in every town and dot the mountainsides.

Lhasa is the holy city. Annually, at the Tibetan New Year in February, thousands of monks and pilgrims come there for religious celebrations, expanding the normal population of perhaps 50,000. On a near-by hillside is the massive Potala, official residence of the Dalai Lama. Atop its roofs are the richly ornamented tombs of former rulers.

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CAIRO ASSOCIATION OF COMMERCE

THIS IS JOURNEY'S END FOR THE OHIO RIVER (Bulletin No. 3); AT CAIRO, ILLINOIS, IT FLOWS INTO THE MEANDERING MISSISSIPPI (left)

Bridge Planned for Italy's Messina Strait

IN 3,000 years of recorded history, Messina Strait (Stretto di Messina) has seen nearly everything—war, earthquake, shipwreck, and even many a prosperous period of trade. Now the historic and hazardous channel between Sicily and the Italian "boot toe" is in line for something new—a bridge. A combination rail and highway span is reported under consideration by the Italian government.

Such a bridge, built across the strait's narrow stretch near the Sicilian port, Messina, would span a water gap of at least two miles. It would permit the present ferry trade to by-pass two of the world's most famous perils to navigators, Scylla and Charybdis. Monsters in mythology, Scylla is pointed out today as a castle-crowned, rocky promontory on the Italian shore; Charybdis, a still-sinister whirlpool off Messina's curving sandspit.

Homer Described Dangers

Between Scylla and Charybdis, deep-water Messina Strait is subject to violent winds and swift, shifting tidal currents. Yet its key position on the highroad of Mediterranean migration and conquest has made it a busy thoroughfare since Homer wrote of the danger-studded travels of Odysseus (Ulysses).

The strait played its part in the successive waves of invasion and war that swept over Sicily, leaving the island an international museum of racial and cultural inheritance. In times of peace and prosperity, the passage was noted as a convenient short cut for shipping between Europe and the East.

As a doorway from one land mass to another, the strait also was, and is, important. Across the riverlike narrows, ferries have shuttled for centuries with land traffic. Today the railway ferry connects the rail systems of Sicily and mainland Italy.

World War II found Messina Strait once more paying the price of strategic location. The channel and the city of Messina became important objectives of Allied bombers during the early phases of Mediterranean action. Then Italians and Germans were using the strait as a double-duty supply artery between Europe and North Africa, sending ships through it and land traffic across it.

Allies Jumped Strait in 1943

Later, after the successful Allied assault on Sicily, the capitulation of the battered seaport of Messina at its northeast tip marked the end of organized resistance on the island.

Then came the September, 1943, jump across the narrow waters of the strait. Thus began the Allied invasion of continental Europe, to be succeeded almost immediately by the big landing at Salerno. There followed the bitter struggle toward final victory in Italy as the Allied armies fought their way northward on the Italian peninsula.

It was nature, however, that dealt the greatest blow in Messina Strait's long history of violence. The earthquake of 1908 caused the

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The influence of Tibetan religion extends into various parts of Asia, including some of the Chinese provinces. The Chinese communists support a rival "lama" whom they no doubt hope to install at Lhasa in place of the Dalai Lama, whose government has been anti-communist.

The church and the nobles own nearly all of Tibet's farmland. Tenants farm on a share-crop basis. Crops are sparse, but so is the population; so there is enough for all. The population is decreasing, at least partly because of the large proportion of monks and because it is not uncommon for two or more brothers to have the same wife.

Much of Tibet's landscape is barren because of the high altitudes. The upland plateaus are swept by violent biting winds during most of the year. To avoid these razor-sharp gales, which arrive about midday, caravans on the ancient trade routes generally travel only in the mornings. The rarity of the atmosphere sometimes affects temperatures to such an extent that rocks in the sun are too hot to touch, whereas a near-by shady spot is freezing cold.

NOTE: Tibet is shown on the National Geographic Society's map of India and Burma. Write the Society's headquarters, Washington 6, D. C., for a price list of maps.

For further information, see "A Woman Paints the Tibetans," in the *National Geographic Magazine* for May, 1949; "Across Tibet from India to China," August, 1946*; and "Konka Risumgongba, Holy Mountain of the Outlaws" and "With the Devil Dancers of China and Tibet" (43 color photographs), July, 1931. *(Issues marked with an asterisk are included on a special list of Magazines available to teachers in packets of ten for $1.00; issues not marked are 50¢ a copy.)*

See also, in the GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS, March 6, 1950, "Tibet, 'Roof of the World,' Has China Ties"; "For U.S. Trade, Tibet May Break Old Rules," October 4, 1948; and "Isolated Tibet Closes Doors to Outsiders," January 12, 1948.

LT. COL. ILIA TOLSTOY

ALL SCHOOLING IN TIBET IS RELIGIOUS. PREPARING FOR MONKHOOD, THESE BOYS LEARN TO READ AND WRITE IN A MONASTERY CLASSROOM

Bulletin No. 3, November 20, 1950

Ohio River Is Nation's Top Cargo Stream

THE Ohio River's nine-foot-deep waterway has come of age. Its 21st birthday finds it the busiest cargo-hauling stream in America's 28,000 miles of inland waterways.

Because of the growth of industry and freight traffic along the Ohio artery, engineers now are studying the cost and problems involved in making a 12-foot channel.

In the week before the financial crash of October, 1929, the steamer *Cincinnati*, queen of a dwindling armada of Ohio River packets, led the first official voyage through the 46 locks and dams down the 981-mile length of the river from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to Cairo, Illinois.

Six Times the Cargo of the Early '20's

The trip signalized completion of the nine-foot-deep channel. Proposed a full century earlier, the federal project had been in work for about two decades. Pittsburgh; Huntington, West Virginia; Louisville, Kentucky, and other cities joined in the pageant all along the route. In Cincinnati's Eden Park, on October 22, President Hoover dedicated both the waterway and a monument honoring Ohio River pioneers.

Currently, the 40,000,000 tons and more of freight annually moved along the deepened course is six times as much as in the early 1920's. Twin-screw Diesel-powered towboats (illustration, next page) push 15 or 20 long barges carrying payloads of 12,000 or more tons—a dozen times as much as could be floated in days when sandbars at low water limited barges to three-foot draft.

Army Engineers built and maintain the Ohio's navigation locks and dams, and 92 more on main tributaries. The river drains some 200,000 square miles of land in which lie 150 cities of more than 10,000 people. Dams provide flood control as well as commerce channels on the system's 3,165 miles of waterways threading through 14 states.

All but four of the dams between Pittsburgh and Cairo (illustration, inside cover) have a movable section that can be lowered when the river is high, enabling boats and barges to pass over them without going through locks. At low water, the movable dams are raised, turning the river into a series of pools and locks.

Barge Lines Provide Freight Service

Coal leads other river cargoes in tonnage. Steel, tin plate, rails, pipe, and products of the almost solid industrial empire from Pittsburgh to Wheeling make up most downstream loads. Oil, gasoline, sulphur, and sugar are everyday items of upstream freight.

Several big barge lines provide public freight service, picking up and delivering barges as their tows move on or close to a time schedule. The largest steel, coal, and oil companies operate tows of their own to carry materials among their riverside plants.

From the heyday of steam packets late in the last century, Ohio River traffic waned until reborn by the deepened channel in 1929. Long before the locks, however, coal tows of up to sixty barges tested rivermanship.

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channel's shores to sink two feet, and wrecked most of the neighboring settlements. The city of Messina was particularly hard hit, with more than half of its 120,000 inhabitants killed by the shock's destruction and by the great sea wave that followed.

Rebuilt after the earthquake, only to be almost leveled by the devastation of World War II, Messina today is reported once again reconstructed, and back on the job as a busy, modern port of Messina Strait (illustration, below).

NOTE: The Strait of Messina (Stretto di Messina) may be located on the Society's maps of Europe and the Near East, and Classical Lands of the Mediterranean.

See also, "Sicily Again in the Path of War," in the *National Geographic Magazine* for September, 1943; "Mediterranean Checkerboard," April, 1942; "Sicily: Island of Vivid Beauty and Crumbling Glory," October, 1927; and "Zigzagging Across Sicily," September, 1924.

B. ANTHONY STEWART

ACROSS MESSINA STRAIT FROM SICILY LOOM THE MOUNTAINS OF ITALY'S "TOE"

The water in the foreground is a tiny harbor protected by the curving sandspit beyond. Messina Strait proper, about three miles wide here, extends beyond the spit. Near the base of the statue-topped shaft swirls Charybdis, the dread whirlpool of the ancients.

Bulletin No. 4, November 20, 1950

Labrador Retrievers Guard Buckingham Palace

FOUR sharp-scented, cold-nosed North Americans have taken up guard duty at England's Buckingham Palace.

Recent robberies there brought the quick assignment of several canine cops to reinforce a 30-man police unit, charged with the protection of His Britannic Majesty's London residence. The New World police dogs are the field-famed Labrador retrievers, who rank among the top sporting dogs of the world.

The Labradors were found to be natural "detectives" during World War II. They were outstanding in tracking down land mines, reputedly doing the job quicker and better than any other breed. In 1946 six of them were assigned to the London metropolitan police force.

Tops in Field Trials

Gentle and friendly by nature, the animals were never trained to attack man but were used solely to pick up the elusive clues of human scent and follow their remarkable noses to the culprits.

For just such skill in detecting, the Labrador retriever has taken more first-place honors in the past two decades of United States field trials than all other breeds of hunting dogs put together. It rates among the four most popular dogs bred by the British for export.

In spite of its name, however, the Labrador retriever was originally a native of Newfoundland, not Labrador. Left on Newfoundland by early traders, the dogs developed naturally, and later a few individuals were taken to England for specialized breeding. The breed was referred to in the last century as the Lesser, or St. John's, Newfoundland, or as the St. John's Water Dog. These names distinguished it from the larger Newfoundland dog, a separate breed.

The people of Newfoundland used the sturdy, thick-haired retriever to haul wood and to retrieve not only wild fowl but also fish that became unhooked just prior to being landed.

Thus its early work on the cold island conditioned the breed to the rigorous life of the sporting dog. Hunting experience developed speed and endurance, as well as such native qualities as sense of smell, obedience, perseverance, and good temper.

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Hundreds of wrecks lie in the river bottom. Others that impeded traffic have been cleaned out by the Army Engineers. Despite navigation markers, the stream still claims victims. A towboat sank after ramming a bridge pier at Cincinnati in 1942, drowning 16 men.

During World War II, more than 1,000 deep-water vessels were launched from Ohio River shipyards for Army and Navy use. Many Naval Reserve officers and men who had never been to sea got their first shipboard training on LST's floating from Pittsburgh to New Orleans.

Vacationers are reported showing increasing interest in leisurely Ohio River cruises. Besides its teeming commerce, the Ohio offers a wealth of historic interest and the varied scenic beauty that made it "la belle rivière" to the early settlers. Showboats, shanty-boats, ancient ferries, and 53 bridges lend interest. Town after town, many diked against floods, add to tourist fascination.

NOTE: The course of the Ohio River may be traced on the Society's map of the United States of America.

For further information, see "So Much Happens Along the Ohio River," in the *National Geographic Magazine* for February, 1950; "Shawneetown Forsakes the Ohio," February, 1948; "Men Against the Rivers," June, 1937; "Ohio, the Gateway State," May, 1932; and "Travels of George Washington," January, 1932.

See also, in the GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS, February 27, 1950, "Shawneetown Unconcerned by Ohio Floods."

JUSTIN LOCKE

A SHINY DIESEL-POWERED TOWBOAT PUSHES COAL-LADEN BARGES THROUGH AN OHIO RIVER LOCK

Okinawa Useful in Korea Operations

OKINAWA, taken by United States forces at great cost in the last important Pacific battle of World War II, proved its worth in the Korean war—first military action to be undertaken by the United Nations.

The island, fortified by the United States, is 70 miles long—largest in the Ryukyu (Nansei) Islands which curve southwest from Japan to Formosa. It became a base for United Nations forces fighting in Korea.

Helped in Early Days of Korean Struggle

From its five major airfields, less than 1,000 air miles from any target on the Korean peninsula, B-29's took off for long-range strikes against targets in territory held by the North Koreans.

An even more timely contribution, perhaps, was Okinawa's small but fresh force of ground troops. These were dispatched posthaste to Korea to help turn back the tide of the communist drive on Pusan early in August.

Thus Okinawa finds itself—long before it was expected—in the role foreseen by military planners who developed it as the center of America's advance defenses in the Pacific. This line sweeps from the Philippines through Okinawa and Japan to the Aleutians and Alaska.

Long before World War II, however, Japan had noted the strategic importance of the Ryukyus. This archipelago is a mountainous chain of 140-odd islands, smaller in total land area than the State of Delaware.

Although the Ryukyus are economically poor, hot, and annually devastated by typhoons, Japan formally annexed them in 1871, following an island-by-island encroachment that began nearly seven centuries earlier.

Rich Prospered and the Poor Stayed Poor

At that time the son of a fugitive Japanese hero established himself as actual ruler over Okinawa, giving his feudal lord in Japan authority in name. Under the dynasty he founded, the islanders—who are now a Japanese-Chinese-Ainu racial mixture—formed close cultural and economic ties with their neighbor on the west—China.

This association, which began in 1372, lasted for five centuries. During this period the Ryukyuan upper classes prospered, and arts were developed. An outstanding craft was the manufacture of lacquer articles —vases, dishes, and even furniture—of the brownish-red often called "lacquer red." But little was done to relieve the poverty of the greater number of the island's people.

These depended for a livelihood on farming the poorest, most barren areas of land. Although only a few degrees north of the Tropic of Cancer, Okinawa does not have the appearance of the usual tropical island. The vegetation is far from luxuriant; there are no jungles of tangled vines and crowded masses of trees.

When the Japanese took over in 1879, they divided the lands of the rich among independent farmers in plots of little more than an acre. Intensive cultivation of these miniature farms did much to improve the

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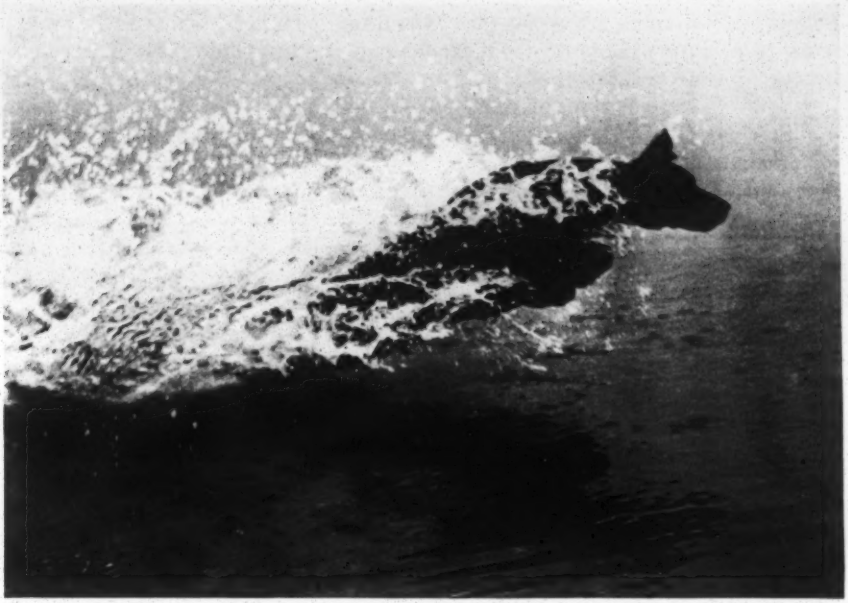
British sportsmen began importing the Labrador retriever in the early 1800's. Some crossbreeding with other gun dogs was attempted, but all the registered Labradors of today are direct descendants of dogs from the kennels of the second and third Earls of Malmesbury, who kept the strain absolutely pure.

In 1903 the breed was recognized by the British Kennel Club and the following year was classified as retriever. By 1906 there were 73 Labradors registered; 40 years later the number had risen to 3,000. The animal's popularity is still on the rise with clubs devoted to its breeding in both England and the United States.

The Labrador retriever is generally black without any white marking except an occasional small spot on the chest. There is also an offshoot that has a tawny yellow coat. All Labradors are strongly built, short-bodied, and extremely active. Deeply affectionate by nature, they make good pets as well as sporting companions.

NOTE: For additional information about dogs, see "Born Hunters, the Bird Dogs," in the *National Geographic Magazine* for September, 1949; "Animals Were Allies, Too," January, 1946*; "Other Working Dogs and the Wild Species," September, 1944; "Non-Sporting Dogs," November, 1943*; "Dogs of Duty and Devotion," December, 1941; "Hark to the Hounds," October, 1937*; "Field Dogs in Action," January, 1937*; and "Man's Oldest Ally, the Dog," February, 1936.

See also, in the GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS, "Mastiffs Become Scarce Amid Canine Plenty," March 6, 1950.



PERCY T. JONES

ALMOST AMPHIBIOUS, THE LABRADOR RETRIEVER CHURNS THROUGH THE WATER LIKE A TORPEDO

Instinct, and generations of training and breeding, class the Labrador among the world's best water retrievers. Working with a hunter, he swims to the fallen quarry—usually a duck—and brings it back. This dog has just been unleashed by its master and every muscle, nerve, and faculty is intent on reaching the floating duck.

living conditions of the poorer islanders. The small allotments were planted to sweet potatoes—which had been introduced earlier by the Chinese—and hardy, adaptable Formosa rice.

While Japan stimulated silk and sugar-cane production for markets abroad, a rapidly growing population made possible another export—manpower. Since 1920 the islanders have numbered more than 800,000. Before World War II, from 20,000 to 30,000 Ryukyuan laborers migrated annually to Japan, Hawaii, and Peru.

With fewer mouths to feed and money coming from prosperous relatives in other lands, islanders were able to offset, somewhat, handicaps of meager natural resources and second-class citizenship in the Japanese empire. Although the Ryukyuans were a definite part of Japanese life, doing their share of the country's work, few of them were given a chance to enter professions. They were more or less step-children of the empire.

NOTE: The Ryukyus are shown on the Society's maps of Southeast Asia, and Japan and Korea, on both of which they appear in large-scale insets.

For further information, see "Okinawa, Pacific Outpost," in the *National Geographic Magazine* for April, 1950; "American Pathfinders in the Pacific," May, 1946*; "Okinawa, Threshold to Japan" (22 color photographs), October, 1945*; and "Peacetime Rambles in the Ryukyus," May, 1945*.

ROBERT STUBENRAUCH

OKINAWANS REBUILD THEIR BOMB-LEVELED HOMES WITH MATERIAL AT HAND

Like a shaggy wig, a thatch roof covers a house of corrugated iron salvaged from American scrap.